



TOTAL COMPENSATION VISION BECOMES REALITY

By TROY A. EID

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DPA

Only weeks after Governor Owens appointed me as the Executive Director of DPA, I headed to Pueblo to face a large group of state employees who were understandably angry about their health plan rates. Pueblo County premiums had been bid separately because utilization rates there were making it difficult for insurance companies to operate successfully. While it was unfair and entirely unacceptable to break out Pueblo County rates, that situation, in many ways, served as the catalyst to make employee benefits for the state workforce a much higher policy priority for the State of Colorado as an employer.

That meeting served as the model for over 50 employee town hall meetings in the past two years where employees loudly and clearly demanded that something be done about the high cost of health benefits. As the result of us raising the issue, the General Assembly overwhelmingly supported and passed HB 1316 (Total Compensation Bill). And when Governor Owens signed the bill into law, the State of Colorado took its biggest step in over 20 years toward providing the workforce affordable and worthwhile benefits as part of a competitive total compensation package.

What does the signing into law of HB 1316 mean for the workforce? HB 1316 recognizes three core components of our total compensation — base salaries, performance-based pay, and state contributions to benefits plans, and provides the flexibility to consider market conditions and recommend distribution amounts that will, on balance, help the workforce. In the short-term it will immediately allow the state to begin closing the gap in the state contribution to benefit plans. In the long-term it provides the mechanism to move the workforce toward more performance-driven pay opportunities, and it lays the foundation for a total compensation system that recognizes that one-size-fits-all is not the best fit for a diverse workforce of 40,000 employees. HB 1316 and the total compensation concept positions the state to address the funding gap *in* benefits and make our benefit plans more affordable for the greater workforce.

More money, however, is not going to stem the rising costs of health insurance. Independent healthcare professionals have lauded the work of the Employee Benefits unit in their efforts to design cost effective and worthwhile plans. At some point, plan design — the balance among higher deductibles or copays, restricted provider lists, and drug formularies- and shaving administrative costs cannot curtail rising premium rates. Even a return to self-funding may only have a minor impact on premiums.

Ultimately, the actuarial risk of an insurable group determines premium rates, meaning how much it is going to cost to insure the group. There is no getting around the fact that our workforce is an expensive group to insure. This is true for several reasons: we are dispersed throughout every county in the state; our average age is 46 (the third oldest workforce in the nation); and we have relatively high utilization rates.

Even though we cannot control where we live or the age of the workforce, we need to do a much better job of recruiting new employees into public service. We can, however, do something about the behaviors that contribute to those extremely high utilization rates. Experts tell us what we already know from common sense: a healthier workforce costs far less to insure. I was astonished that in a recent DPA survey of the workforce, more than 40% of those who responded said that they *never* exercise.

Many employers know the value of a sponsored wellness program. The state will soon open a fitness center with such a program. While it is located in the downtown area, we hope to use it as a model for the state. All the work, all the plan design, all the money will not mean a thing if we do not start taking personal responsibility for our own health. DPA continues to lay the groundwork to provide affordable and worthwhile health benefits. Taking control of our own health and fitness is also up to each and every one of us.



MyDPA & HRU

BY MONICA CORTEZ-SANGSTER,
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES UNIT

MyDPA is here! Last month, Deputy Executive Director, Paul Farley introduced “*MyDPA*,” the department’s very own *Intranet*. The Human Resources Unit (HRU) is ecstatic about having this communication tool that provides DPA employees ready access, to the most up-to-date information.

The HRU portion of *MyDPA* includes information on the following areas:

- Overview (who we are, what we do, and who to contact)
- Job Evaluation
- Pay & Benefits
- Dispute Resolution
- Employee Resources
- Employment
- Risk Management
- Separation
- Training

As Paul explained in his email introducing *MyDPA*, this internal *Intranet* is in its infancy phase. The IT team and EO Units are working to beef up their pages with content, forms, procedures, policies, etc. Eventually, *MyDPA* will be the communication tool of choice and main source of information rather than emailing every instance there is an employment opportunity or discount offer that may or may not be of interest.

During this transition period, instead of emailing all of the content, DPA employees will receive an email titled “News From HRU.” The content of this email will include a brief description of the hot topics in HR and link you to HRU’s page via *MyDPA*. On HRU’s page you will find a box to the left, called “Hot Topics” that includes links to employee discounts, DPA job opportunities, and other important news. As *MyDPA* develops, the “News from HRU” email will phase out and *MyDPA* will become a self-service tool that employees must access to find out the information they want or need at their own discretion.

MyDPA’s future has a lot in store for all of us. Right now, it is what’s called a first generation *Intranet* site that allows us to retrieve and download forms online, fill out, and print. We are headed in the right direction, and hope that eventually, with the click of a button, employees will be able to access *MyDPA* and update their personal information. HRU is currently working with the IT team on analyzing ways in which *MyDPA* can assist HRU in streamlining HR processes to make them more effective and efficient. We’ll keep you posted as the project proceeds.

Thanks to the IT team for all of their hard work in making *MyDPA* happen. It is a work in progress, specifically the HRU page, so if you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please email HRU at: DPAHRU@state.co.us. *MyDPA* may be accessed at <http://mydpa.state.co.us>.

Thanks!

Thank you to the DPA Employee Council for all their hard work in facilitating this year’s employee appreciation picnics. The Pueblo picnic will be held on September 18, and no doubt it will be as great a success as the metro Denver ones.

COUNCIL MEMBERS INCLUDE:

Roslyn McMillon
Sylvia Santistevan
Teddy Abad Perez
Mike Wallace
Vicki Bottenberg
Celestine Bryant

Mercy Fischer
Kelly Tyler
Paul Farley
Mike Sexson
Cathy Buckles
Susan Perez

Hallie Lee
Rene Ahl
Laura Blake
Judi Karg
Jill Vaughan

Employee of the Month: Sandy DiMatteo

Sandy provides personnel, budget, and other administrative support for the entire Division of Finance and Procurement (DFP). This past June was particularly challenging as she supported two unanticipated projects: the moves of Central Payroll and State Buildings and Real Estate Programs (SBREP), and the RTD reevaluation of the Eco Pass program.

Earlier this year, RTD announced that it was going to abolish the Eco Pass Program. Sandy wrote, distributed, and tabulated a survey of all the state employees who participate in the program and presented it to RTD and the stakeholders committee who then decided to keep the Program alive and institute a relatively minor cost increase.

Also, at the end of FY03, DPA realigned the department's construction management functions under SBREP, adding three Division of Central Services employees to DFP. The division was presented with an opportunity to consolidate the larger SBREP office by switching space with the Central Payroll office, consolidating the payroll office with the State Controller. This all evolved in about three weeks time, and Sandy filled a critical coordination need by spearheading planning meetings that involved department IT, telephone, and mailroom personnel. Sandy did an excellent job allocating follow-up responsibility, planning the financing, and generally helping facilitate the move.

She has an unparalleled ability to coordinate projects that require close collaboration by a variety of people.

The resources available to DFP for support are very "thin."

Sandy is challenged in supporting the division already, and her exceptional work on the move and RTD Eco Pass program demonstrates her commitment to the Division and Department.



Sandy and Troy just after he presented her with the EOM certificate.

Also nominated this month: **Donna Childers** of DOAH for her work with the electronic transmission of final orders; **Darrell Geist** of Central Services for his proactive and customer focused work at 1881 Pierce Street; **Vicki Bottenberg** of DHR for providing an extraordinarily high level of customer service; **Aminah Patterson** of DoIT for providing excellent customer service instead of excuses; **Monica Cortez-Sangster** of EO for her consummate professionalism and true "team-player" attitude; and Administrative Law Judge **Kristin Rozansky** of SPB for her outstanding leadership as co-chair of the Career Services Authority (CSA) Board for the City and County of Denver.

DPA'S SUMMER INTERNS

The Central Services and Human Resources divisions are participating in a summer intern program with Denver Youth Services (DAYS). The program offers paid summer internships to economically disadvantaged youth between the ages of 14 and 18. The Summer Youth Employment Program places the interns at participating businesses/agencies to help provide them exposure to real-life work environments and give them the opportunity to learn good work habits and earn money.

The interns are paid by DAYS and are allowed to work up to 20 hours a week for ten weeks. While the division is getting some extra work done, the real benefit is helping a young person learn skills they will be able to take into the job market. Aside from doing office work, the interns have had the benefit of an Outlook 2002 and a communications skills class. Hopefully the experience will enable them to find good jobs in the future.

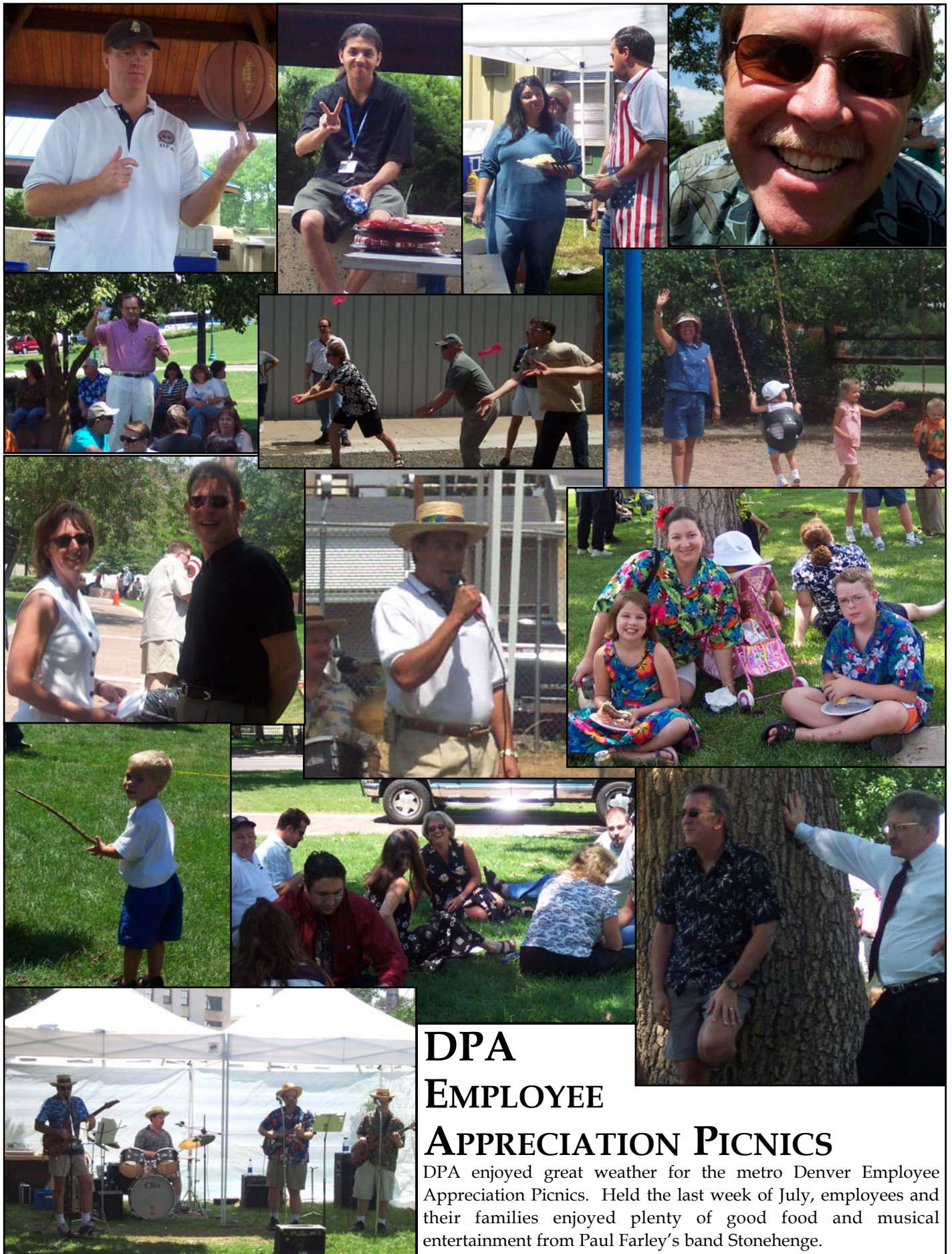
Intern Danae Johnson said working in Central Services was "cool, it's nice to be able to learn new skills and see how it

is to work in an office." Previously, she has worked in customer service and as a cashier and is enjoying getting some hands-on experience in office skills.



Summer Intern Sabrina Abeyta (left) and DCS's Maria Sandoval get some filing done.

M a r i a Sandoval, who is acting as an intern supervisor, said it was nice to be able to teach them skills they will be able to use to get themselves a good job in the years to come.



DPA EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION PICNICS

DPA enjoyed great weather for the metro Denver Employee Appreciation Picnics. Held the last week of July, employees and their families enjoyed plenty of good food and musical entertainment from Paul Farley's band Stonehenge.

KUDOS/NOTES OF APPRECIATION

Ms. (Cindy) Nardini,

I just wanted to give a big THANK YOU to John Alonzo and his staff. I sent quite a few records (approx. 20 legal size bank boxes of LPC and MFT records) to John for microfilming the first part of June - no problem - his staff prepped (about half) and microfilmed all of them. For this first bunch, John called me to discuss the size of the film, and the fact that he could film them more economically and faster (both sides of a document at once) if we utilized a different size picture. After researching to determine whether or not we had the capability to view and enlarge the picture, I was able to give him the go ahead. This took up about a week of the time he had for microfilming this group of files.

I called John again, around June 15th, asking if he thought his staff could microfilm another 69 regular size boxes of records for me and bill them in this fiscal year (these records also needed to have some prepping done). He is such a positive individual, and very easy to work with (or I wouldn't have even asked him about the 2nd bunch) - he told me he would make every effort to get as much filming done as possible. Since it was so late in June, I was very doubtful about getting any of this filming accomplished for billing in FY03.

I was very pleased and surprised (to say the least) when I contacted John to get an approximate amount billed for the microfilming, and he informed me that in addition to completing all LPC and MFT files, his staff had also been able to complete approximately 50% of the Unlicensed Psychotherapist files. I want to give highest kudos to all involved in this effort!

Joan P. Seggerman
Division of Registrations
Office of Licensing

Hi Monica (Cortez-Sangster),

I just wanted to make sure you know how great it is to work with Dianne Ferris. She is so customer-focused and accommodating. I know that whenever I have a question or need assistance, she will get the right answer to me. If she doesn't immediately know the answer, she does the necessary research and gets back to me in a timely manner. Dianne is truly an asset to your team.

Jill (Elggren)

Frank (Lombardi),

I would like to commend your excellent employees and thank them for a job well done. Cindy Wunderlich, Mike Vigil, Darrell Geist and Ernie Atencio worked diligently (to even the smallest task) to ensure the smooth opening of the Pierce Street Driver License Office. Every one of them showed high work standards, quality and professionalism in ensuring the rotunda was remodeled and ready for our opening day on Friday, July 11th.

With sincere appreciation,

Jan Welling, Field Operations Manager
Motor Vehicle Business Group
Driver License Section

Correction:

Last month we reported that Lenora "Larkin" received a note of appreciation from the City and County of Denver. It was **LENORA LANCASTER**, of the Central Services' Travel Management Program, that received the Kudo for a travel program presentation she provided.

DPA Says Goodbye to Phyllis Jiminez

After 25 years with the State Print Shop, Phyllis Jiminez has retired. When asked if she has any big plans, she said that having worked the early shift all those years she is looking forward to sleeping in on a regular basis. She also wants to spend time training her new puppy and planning a trip for this coming winter.

Phyllis spent the majority of her career in the bindery section, but also served as a back-up operator for Quick Copy. Over the years Phyllis became quite knowledgeable and both her pleasant personality and experience will be

sorely missed.

"Phyllis was a joy to work with," said Denise Cisneros. "She always had a good attitude and was willing to lend a helping hand when needed."

Good luck to Phyllis in her future endeavors and hopefully she and her puppy will enjoy many restful mornings as the rest of us march off to work.



Phyllis at her retirement party.

A RICH MAN

BY PAUL FARLEY

Shortly before he died at the age of 94, the Irish writer and playwright George Bernard Shaw was asked to name what famous person he had known – a statesman, artist, philosopher, writer – that he missed the most. Shaw replied, “The man I miss the most is the man I could have been.”

I was thinking of this as we took our oldest son, Will, to begin his freshman year of college at the University of North Carolina at Asheville. We had been looking at various colleges for most of the past two years, so it certainly was no surprise that in August 2003 he would be leaving home to begin the next phase of his life. But as the day approached I found more and more melancholy finding a place alongside the natural pride and hope. Those of you younger than me may have no clue what I’m talking about. Those of you who are older may find it obvious and mundane. But even having now eliminated about 95% of the people who might have some interest in reading this, I will press on.

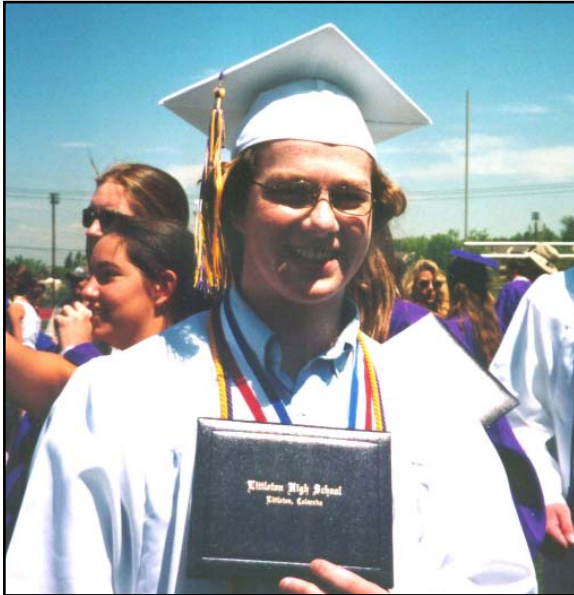
You see, I have known Will most of his life, and the nearly 19 years now appear to be some hazy dream – how did we come to this point? I remember, wanting to ensure that our child got off to a good start, putting headphones over my pregnant wife’s abdomen and turning up *Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* (some of you may have seen a similar scene in the film *Mr. Holland’s Opus*, but my wife will testify that I did this many years earlier)(she really is a saint, you know). And when Will was born a few weeks later, he didn’t fuss or cry but instead calmly and curiously examined the world around him, and decided it would do.

At the tender age of seven I took him to climb his first Fourteener (Mt. Sherman), where we scampered and crawled the last few hundred feet in the midst of a howling windstorm. The more seasoned climbing party lunching at the summit were mightily impressed and made Will feel like he had just conquered Everest.

Because I had once imagined myself as a musician, as Will grew up he was surrounded by music. If he was interested in piano, guitar, bass, drums, or whatever, he only had to reach out to satisfy his curiosity. Over time, he displayed an obvious gift not only for playing (especially bass and piano), but also composing and arranging. A couple of years ago I hit the limit of my ability to teach him anything

about the subject; it’s like that bit from Star Wars: “*The circle is now complete. When I left you, I was but the learner. Now I am the master.*” In 2001 we recorded an album together which, whatever its musical merits, was great fun to do and is already a bit of a treasured keepsake.

Will has had outstanding academic achievements, graduating with high honors. At the same time, he was recognized as the top student by the Performing Arts Department for excellence in instrumental virtuosity, vocal ability (member of the All-State Choir and the All-State Jazz Choir), and accomplishments as an actor.



But we are most pleased about how he has grown both morally and spiritually. We belong to what some would say is a rather exotic religion, but from very early on he has been active as an acolyte, reader, and more recently, assistant choir director at our church. It was always Will asking Mom and Dad to take him to church *more*. We haven’t had the attitude or arguments that can come with the territory with teenagers; instead, over the past few years more and more we’ve

shared common interests and activities, touching on both mundane issues at home and the great issues of the day.

And so I finally realized what it was that was getting me down. It wasn’t really an “empty-nest” thing, because we still have two children (and a dog!) at home, and still never enough time to do everything we’d like. No, it’s because I will miss being with one of my best friends – a thoughtful young man of letters, and of the arts, and of faith.

In short, Will has become the young man I wish I could have been. I am sure I will work through all of this into the next phase of our relationship, but whatever else, I am a very rich man indeed.

This and That:

- “A truly rich man is one whose children run into his arms when his hands are empty.” – Anonymous
- “Build me a son, O Lord, who will be strong enough to know when he is weak, and brave enough to face himself when he is afraid, one who will be proud and unbending in honest defeat, and humble and gentle in victory.” – Douglas MacArthur
- “When a father gives to his son, both laugh; when a son gives to his father, both cry.” – William Shakespeare